

DOE Assistant Secretary of Nuclear Energy discusses GNEP

Dennis Spurgeon, DOE assistant secretary for Nuclear Energy, and members of the Nuclear Energy Research Advisory Committee (NERAC) visited Idaho Falls on Tuesday, Feb. 20, and Wednesday, Feb. 21, to attend a NERAC public meeting and the groundbreaking ceremony for Idaho National Laboratory's Center for Advanced Energy Studies (CAES).

At the NERAC public meeting, Spurgeon discussed the U.S. role in the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP), a comprehensive strategy to demonstrate safe, secure nuclear fuel recycling. GNEP is part of the President's Advanced Energy Initiative. The DOE Office of Nuclear Energy that Spurgeon heads is also the principal secretarial office for Idaho National Laboratory, the DOE's lead lab for nuclear energy research, development, education and demonstration. The following are excerpts from the meeting:

- [FY-2008 Budget](#) (2.2MB wmv)
- [Do you see a softening in the attitude towards nuclear power?](#) (3.3MB wmv)
- [Is there enough uranium?](#) (1.2MB wmv)
- [What is Idaho's role in the future of nuclear power?](#) (879kB wmv)
- [What's been the most challenging aspect of GNEP?](#) (1.7MB wmv)

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At the groundbreaking ceremony, Spurgeon highlighted CAES' role as a center for advancing scientific achievement and a step forward in reducing dependence on foreign oil. CAES is a public/private partnership among Boise State University (BSU), Idaho State University (ISU), the University of Idaho (UI), and Idaho National Laboratory (INL). The facility will host research on emerging energy-related challenges and serve as an education and training facility in energy science, engineering, technology, policy conceptualization and related disciplines. The four member institutions hold expertise in biotechnology, chemical science, nuclear engineering, materials science, advanced modeling and simulation, environmental stewardship, and public policy.

Photo: CAES groundbreaking

During his visit, Spurgeon also took time to honor INL's National and Homeland Security associate lab director, Dr. K.P. Ananth, with an exceptional public service award. The award was presented to Ananth following a review of the laboratory's national security programs. During the ceremony, Spurgeon remarked that Ananth's leadership has helped develop INL into a vibrant and leading laboratory for national security solutions.

Dennis Spurgeon was nominated as assistant secretary for Nuclear Energy by President Bush on Feb. 13, 2006, and confirmed by the U.S. Senate on March 27, 2006. Spurgeon is responsible for the U.S. Department of Energy's nuclear energy enterprise, including nuclear energy technology research and development, management of the Department's nuclear energy technology infrastructure, and support of nuclear energy education in the United States.

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(From right to left) Spurgeon breaks ground at the CAES site alongside Rep. Mike Simpson.

Photo: Rogers, Sellers and Spurgeon

(From right to left) Spurgeon with DOE's Beth Sellers and Idaho Falls Mayor Jared Fuhrman.